

Tropical Cyclone 01B

The first North Indian Ocean tropical cyclone, TC (01B), of 1998 developed in the southern Bay of Bengal in mid May. The weak tropical disturbance tracked toward southern India before turning northeastward toward Bangladesh. The disturbance reached tropical cyclone strength and peaked at 70 kt just before landfall in Bangladesh.

TC 01B developed from a weak, broad circulation in the near-equatorial trough southeast of Sri Lanka, India on 18 May. The cyclone moved northward for 24 hours, before turning westward toward the northern tip of Sri Lanka. As the cyclone became more organized, it moved northeastward toward Bangladesh. A TCFA was issued at 171600Z May and the first warning was issued at 180900Z May. The cyclone reached a maximum intensity of 70 kt at 200000Z May, just prior to landfall near Chittagong, Bangladesh.

The Associated Press reported that TC 01B ravaged the low-lying Bangladesh coast killing at least 12 people and destroying thousands of homes. A Chittagong Port Authority official reported a fully loaded oil tanker was damaged in a collision with another ship in the storm. A fishing boat and trawler were also caught in the high winds and seas and capsized.

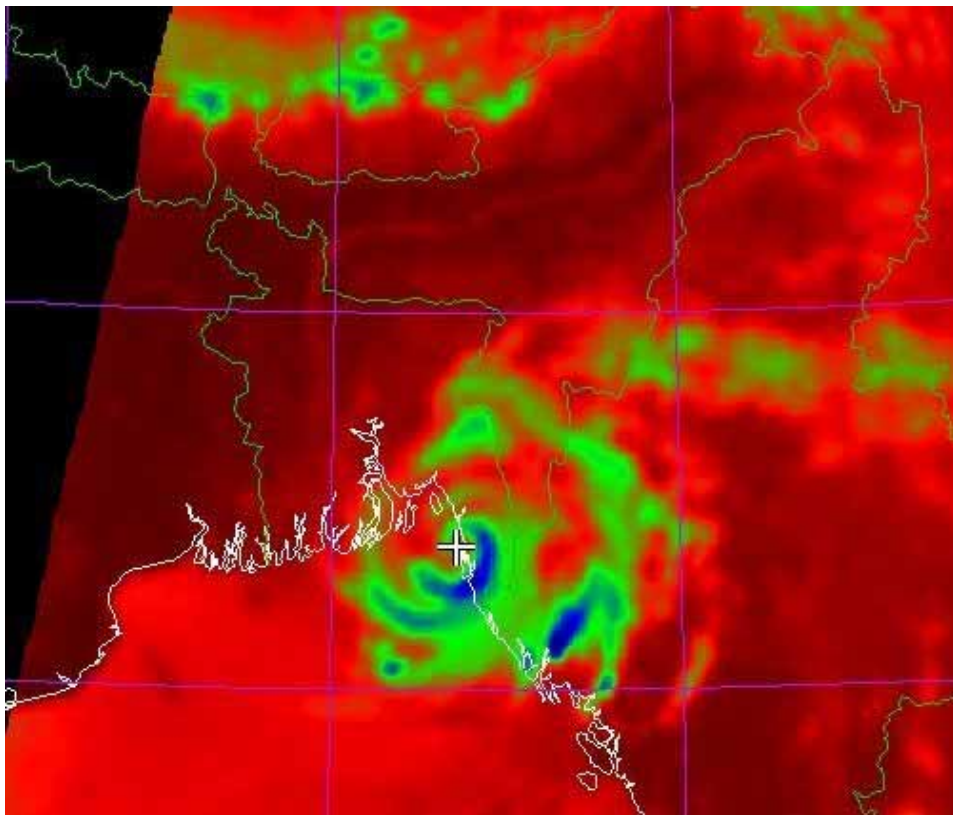


Figure 3-01B-1. 85 GHz SSM/i image at 200113Z May as TC 01B made landfall at its max intensity.

